

A Long Time Ago

Favourite Stories
Re-told by
Mrs. Oscar Wilde
and Others.



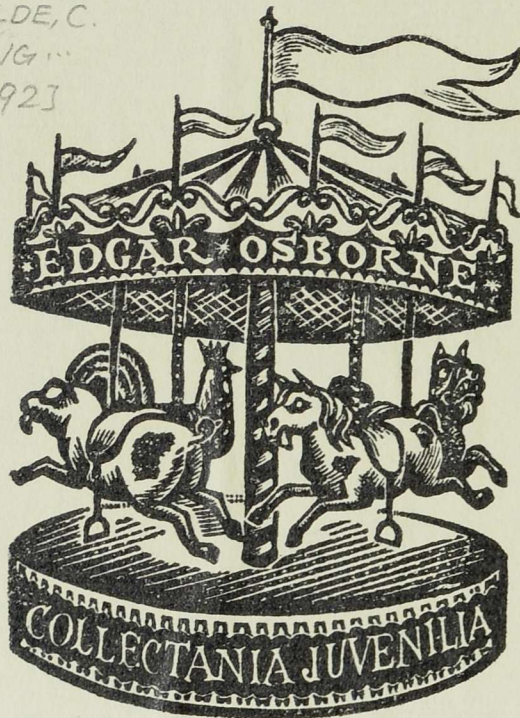
Illustrated by
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Miss Beryl Slater

With love from

Walter J. Butler

Nov 1891



A LONG TIME AGO © FAVOURITE STORIES
Retold by MRS OSCAR WILDE & OTHERS.
Illustrated by EDDIE J. ANDREWS
and R. A. BELL.

A long time ago, I've understood,
Both boys and girls were always good:

Not ever unkind or naughty they,
But nice and pleasant all the day.

So let us see, is my advice,
If we cannot be just as nice.

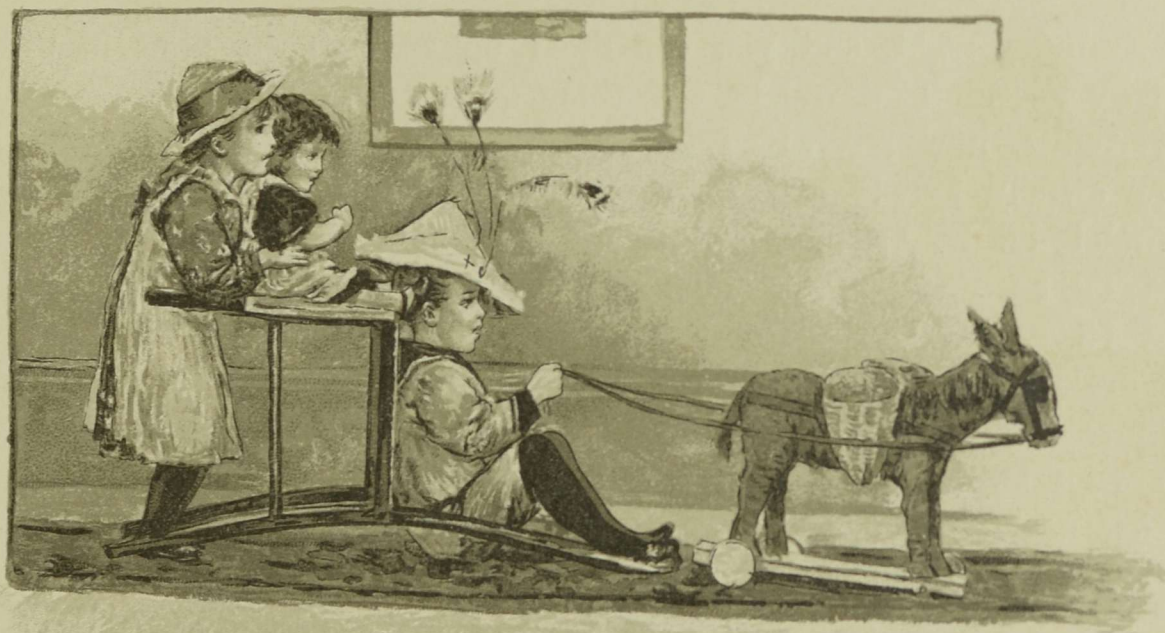
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Christmas Eve.



A Long Time Ago.

THERE were six of us at home. Alice is my name, and I'm the eldest, and then there were Bob and Bella, Tom and Ethel, and Baby Tot. There we were in the nursery trying hard to think how to amuse ourselves. We were quite tired of hide-and-seek, blind-man's-buff, musical-chairs, and all the other old games. We had burnt our fingers every night at snap-dragon, the Christmas-tree was turning brown, and there wasn't even one cracker left to pull, so the boys pulled the girls' hair instead, and began getting into mischief all round.

"Dear me, children, what's the matter?" exclaimed our dear Auntie, coming into the nursery.

"Oh, Auntie," we cried, "we don't know what to do with ourselves. We want a new game to play, or will you tell us a story, that will be better still?"

"Tom and I are going back to school in a week," said Bob, "and we want this to be the jolliest week of the holidays."

"But," said Auntie, taking Baby Tot upon her knee, "I have already told you the stories over and over again."

"Never mind, Auntie dear," said Bella; "we're not tired of them, so tell them to us once more."

"This is what I'll do," said Auntie, after thinking a little bit; "I'll tell

you a story every night, and you can dress up and act the parts in the different fairy tales. That will be something quite new."

"Oh, Auntie, how lovely!" I cried.

"How awfully jolly!" said Bob.

"Hurrah! I'll be 'Robinson Crusoe,'" cried Tom, with glee.

"And I'll be Friday," said Bob.

"And I'll be Sunday," cried Tot, clapping her little fat hands.

This made us all laugh. Tot didn't know very much about stories then, because she was so young.

"Tot shall be the 'Old Woman who Lived in a Shoe,' and the dolls shall be her naughty children," said Auntie.

"And we'll have 'Aladdin' and 'Jack and the Beanstalk,'" said Ethel.

"And 'The Sleeping Beauty' and 'Beauty and the Beast,'" said Bella, with delight.

And, oh, what a lovely rummage we had in dear Auntie's boxes for clothes to dress up in! She lent us her beautiful silks and satins, but made us promise to be very careful of them. And then we made crowns out of cardboard, and painted them with green, and red, and blue, until they looked quite covered with emeralds,

rubies, and sapphires. And Papa's silver-headed cane made a lovely sceptre; and we made flags out of handkerchiefs, and Bob blackened his face with burnt cork to make himself like Friday.

And I am quite sure it was just the merriest week we ever spent, and so we think it only right that we should tell all other little boys and girls how to amuse themselves with quite a new game.

And here, too, are the stories that Auntie told us, one every night, and we only hope you will enjoy them as much as we did.

Edric Vredenburg.





Beauty and The Beast.

ONCE upon a time there was a rich merchant who had three daughters, Marigolda, Dressalinda, and Beauty. He was very fond of them all, but he loved Beauty best, because she was such a good girl.

One day he lost nearly all his money.

"Now we shall be shabby all our lives," said Dressalinda.

"And I shall never have any money to spend," whined Marigolda.

"Never mind, dear father," Beauty said, "we shall be happy somehow. I'm sure I shall soon learn how poor people manage."

And so she did. They went to live in a little cottage, and while her sisters lay in bed all the morning reading story-books, Beauty did all the housework, and kept everything as neat as a new pin. One day a letter came to her father, telling him that someone who owed him some money would pay it if he would go to town.

"Bring us something back," said the elder sister.

"Bring me a new silk dress," Dressalinda cried.

"I want a purse with gold in it," said Marigolda.

"But what will Beauty have?" asked the father. Beauty asked for a rose, because she thought that would not be an expensive present. So the old father went off to town, but he did not get his money after all. He was coming sadly home, when he passed a beautiful garden, and smelt the roses there. "At least I can take Beauty what she wanted," he said to himself. He had no money to buy roses, and instead of asking for one, like an honest man, he was mean enough to lean over the hedge and *steal*

one. But no sooner had he broken the stem of the rose than he heard a dreadful growl, and, looking up, saw a great beast, like a bear, with a big spiky club in its hand. "Mercy, good Beast!" cried he, falling on his knees, "I didn't know I was doing any wrong. I am a most respectable merchant." "What!" the Beast growled, "a merchant, and not know stealing is wrong? I shall kill you at once." But the merchant begged so hard for mercy that at last the Beast said: "Well, you have three daughters. If one of them will come instead of you, I'll let you off; if not, I shall call for you to-morrow a little before breakfast time." The poor merchant made his way home half-dead with fright, and told his daughters all about it. "It's all your fault, Beauty; your stupid rose did it all!" they said. Beauty put her arms round her Father's neck and kissed him a great many times, and went into her own room without a word. Next morning they found a letter from her, saying she had gone to the Beast's house. She went through the rose-garden to the Beast's house, which was very beautiful. She went in, and there was a breakfast-table set for two.

"Good morning, Beast," she said, in a trembling voice.

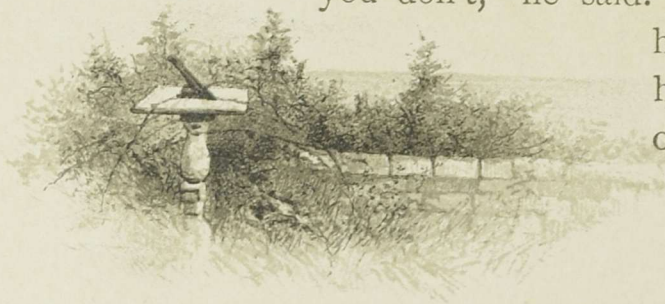
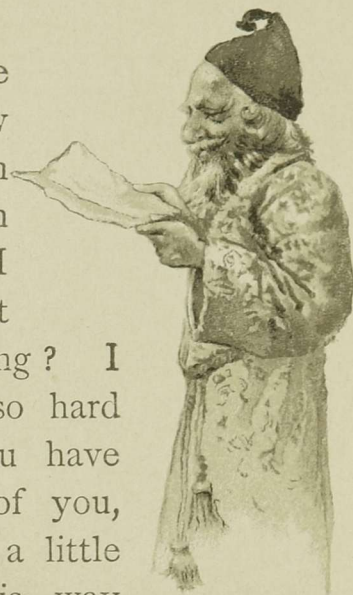
"Good morning, Beauty. I don't want to eat *you!*" the Beast said. "Will you pour out the coffee for breakfast?"

Beauty did so, and the Beast took breakfast without another word. When they had done, he said: "Beauty, you are just the sort of little girl I should like always to pour out my coffee. Will you marry me?"

"Oh, no, thank you, Beast," said Beauty. The Beast sighed and went away. After that, every morning they had breakfast together, and every morning he said: "Will you marry me?" And every morning she said: "Oh, no, thank you, Beast."

And all day Beauty was alone; but she had everything you can think of, books, flowers, and tame cats, for the Beast was very kind to her. One day he found her crying, and she told him she wanted to go home and tell her father that she was very happy. So the Beast told her she might go, but she must be back to breakfast the next morning. "I shall die if you don't," he said. Her father was very much pleased to see

her, for he had thought she was dead; but her sisters were jealous when they heard of the beautiful palace she lived in, and





Beauty
and the Beast.

they gave her something to drink which made her sleep too long; and when she awoke it was very late indeed. Poor Beauty ran all the way to the Beast's house. She had broken her promise, and the Beast would think she did not care about him; but she did care about him, because he was so kind to her. When she reached his house she ran through all the rooms—but there was no Beast to be found. Then she ran into the garden, and there, among the roses, the poor Beast was lying. She kneeled down beside him and stroked his furry paws, and called him, but he did not answer. Then she put both her arms round his thick neck, and kissed his big, ugly head. "Oh, dear Beast, wake up! Don't die, or I shall die too! I love you so, and I'll marry you, if you like, tomorrow, before breakfast." And at these words the Beast jumped up, and the skin dropped from him like a coat, and he was a most beautiful prince.

You can imagine Beauty's surprise when she saw a charming young prince in the place of the poor shaggy Beast. She was so astonished that I really think she would have run away if the prince had not spoken to her in such a sweet voice. He had been enchanted, it seems, by a wicked magician. But the magician could only change his shape, he had no power over him in any other way; and it was his goodness of heart, which even his ugly shape could not conceal, that led to his release.

"Only love," he explained to Beauty, "could make me a prince again. And you have loved me, and you shall be my princess!"

So they were married, and lived happily ever afterwards, and forgave the sisters their spiteful trick, and asked them to the wedding.





Jack and the Beanstalk.

MANY years ago, in the wonderful days when King Arthur reigned over Britain, there lived a poor widow with her only son, whose name was Jack. Now, Jack was fond of his mother, but he was very lazy and very careless, and he would not do any work, but spent his mother's money so that she got poorer and poorer. At last she had nothing left but a white cow, and when Jack came home one day from rambling in the fields, he found his mother crying, and then she told him that she had no money left, and scolded him for bringing his mother into poverty. And Jack saw how wrong he had been, and he was sorry, and asked his mother to let him go and sell the cow in the nearest village. So he started off, leading the cow by an halter. Soon after he had started he met a butcher, who asked Jack whether he was going to sell the cow, and offered him a handful of brightly coloured beans in payment. And Jack thought the beans so pretty that he took them eagerly, and gave the cow to the butcher. But his mother, when she saw the beans, burst into tears, and she seized them out of Jack's hand and threw them, with all her force, into a hole in the garden.



"You have ruined us both now," she said, "and there is not even any bread for your supper."

So Jack went supperless to bed, and in the morning he woke up very early. And there seemed a dark shadow across the window, and looking out to see what it was, he saw that the beans had sprouted in the night and had grown up into a thick twisted stalk right up into the sky out of sight. Then Jack made up his mind to climb up and find out what was to be seen at the top. So up he climbed, and he climbed for four hours, and at the end of that time he had got to the top. Then he looked round him, and he saw that he was in a completely deserted country, with not even a tree in sight. And as he was wondering what he should do he saw

a fairy coming towards him with a golden wand in her hand, and a very stern look in her face. And when she got close to him she began to speak to him, and she upbraided him for his cruelty to his mother, till Jack hung his head very much ashamed. "And now," she said, "you may undo the mischief you have done if you follow my directions in everything."

Then she asked him if he knew anything about his father, but Jack answered that he knew nothing, for when he asked about his father, his mother always wept and would tell him nothing. So the fairy told him that his mother was bound by a promise to tell him nothing, but that she was not so bound.

"Your father," she said, "was a very good man, and he was owner of all this beautiful country, which, in his days, was very fertile. But there came a great giant one day and killed your father and took possession of everything he had. And he was about to kill you and your mother also, but because your mother begged so hard for mercy, he let her go free, on condition that she never told you of your father. This promise your mother has kept. I was not able to help your father in his troubles, because I had transgressed one of the laws of fairyland, and was condemned for a time to lose my power. Now I am free, and I will help you. It was I who offered you the coloured beans, and put it into your heart to take them. Now you must go and find this giant and get back your father's land. If you go straight along this road you will come to a house where he lives. Remember that I shall always be by you to guard you from danger, as long as you do well." So saying, she disappeared, and Jack found himself alone on the road. Then he set out walking, and walked along for hours, until, just when the sun was nearly set, and he felt quite exhausted, he came to a large white house.

He knew that this must be the giant's house, and he knocked at the door. It was opened by a small, thin, old woman, and he begged her to





Jack
and the
Beanstalk.

give him shelter for the night. But she shook her head. "My husband is the giant," she said, "and he would kill you and eat you."

But Jack begged her so hard to take him and hide him, that at last she took him in and gave him bread and butter to eat. And while he was eating it the ground began to tremble, and the poor little woman, shaking with fright, pushed Jack into the oven and shut the door, and just afterwards the giant walked in. "Wife, bring me supper!" he roared.

And she brought him a whole cold sheep, and through a hole in the oven Jack watched him eating it, and saw how he chewed small bones with his great jaws, and threw the large ones away when he had well picked them.

"Wife, my hen!" he then shouted.

And his wife brought a beautiful hen, and put it on the table before him, and he called out, "Lay!"

Every time he said "Lay!" the hen laid a great golden egg, and Jack watched her with eager eyes.

But, after a time, the giant grew tired of playing with the golden eggs, and fell asleep in the big arm-chair. As soon as Jack heard him snoring he seized the hen and darted off as fast as ever he could run, till he got to the beanstalk, and down he slid till he was again in his mother's garden. And the poor woman was overjoyed to see him, for she had been afraid that he had run away because she had scolded him the night before. And when he showed her the golden eggs she was very happy, and the hen laid always golden eggs for them, which they sold and so grew very rich. Jack did not tell his mother anything about the fairy, but after a time he remembered all that the fairy had said to him, and his longing to go once more to the giant's house became unbearable. Then he told his mother that he must go up the beanstalk once more, and she entreated him not to go.

At last, however, Jack could bear it no longer, and getting up very



early one morning he climbed the bean-stalk, and once more he walked along the dusty road until he came to the white house. He knocked at the door, and it was opened by the same woman, but Jack had grown so much that she did not remember him. Then he told her how he had lost his way and was starving, and begged for one night's shelter.

"I took pity on a poor boy once," she said, shaking her head, "and he ran away with my husband's hen that laid the golden eggs, and he has beaten me every day since."

But Jack begged and entreated so much, that at last she took him into the house and hid him in the copper.

Soon the giant came in to his supper. "I smell fresh meat," he shouted.

"It is only a piece of raw meat that the crows brought and left at the top of the house," answered his wife, trembling, and the giant was satisfied.

"Wife, bring me my money bags," he cried, after supper.

And, after a little time, she came back staggering under two huge heavy bags.

"Why have you been so long?" shouted the giant, aiming a blow at her.

"They are so heavy," she answered. "I thought I should never get them up out of the cellar."

Then, grunting and growling, he emptied the bags, first one which contained all pieces of silver, and then the other, which was full of pieces of gold, and when he had counted them all, he put them into the bags, tied them up, and went to sleep.

And as soon as Jack heard him snoring he jumped out of the copper and seized the bags. But, just as he had his hands upon them, a little dog darted from under the giant's chair, and began barking violently. Jack stood quite still with fear, but seeing that the giant did not wake, he threw a piece of meat to the dog, and he made off as fast as he could.

When he got home he could not find his mother, and at last he found her at a neighbour's house lying at the point of death, for she thought that Jack had left her altogether.

And he was sorry then that he had made her so unhappy, and had





The Old Woman
who lived
in a Shoe.



not told her that he was going ; but when she saw him again the joy made her well, and he showed her the bags of gold and silver pieces that he had brought home.



And for a long time Jack remained at home now happily ; but at last the craving to go away came over him again, for the words of the fairy were for ever ringing in his ears.

At last, one morning he got up very early, before the sun rose, for he thought that, perhaps, he could climb the beanstalk and get back before his mother missed him. Each time the journey to the giant's house seemed shorter, and now he got there in about an hour's time, just as the sun was about to rise.

The giant's wife was standing at the door of the house, looking to see if her husband was coming in to his breakfast, and Jack came to her and asked if she would give him something to eat, for he had been out all night. He had so disguised himself this time that she did not recognise him at all. But when he asked for food she shook her head.

"I dare not take you in here," she said. "Twice I have given food to boys, but they have robbed the giant each time, and he has beaten me. Next time he will kill me."

But Jack pleaded with her until at last she could no longer resist his entreaties, but took him in and gave him food ; and when she heard the giant coming she hid him under a barrel.

And when the giant came into the house he seized her, and shouted "I smell meat!"

But she said, "There is none in the house."

This time, however, the giant would not be satisfied, but he searched through the house, looking in the oven and in the copper, and once he put his hand on the barrel and Jack quaked with fear ; but the giant did not look under it, and at last sat down to his breakfast. And when he had finished he called out :

"Bring me my harp!"

And his wife brought a beautiful golden harp, and placed it before the giant.

"Play!" he roared. And forthwith the harp played the most exquisite



music, which sent him fast asleep, for he had drunk a great deal of wine. The moment Jack saw that the giant was asleep he seized the harp. But the harp was enchanted by a fairy, and when he touched it she screamed :

“Master ! Master !”

And when Jack saw that the giant was awake he ran for his very life. He ran faster than the giant, for the giant was heavy and drunk, and could not run steadily. So that by the time Jack was at the bottom of the beanstalk the giant had only just reached the top, and Jack called out to his mother to bring him a hatchet.

In another minute he had chopped the beanstalk off the ground, and the giant fell headlong to the ground and was killed.

And when the villagers heard how Jack had killed the Giant they were so pleased, that they gave him a beautiful horse with gold and silver trappings, and Jack rode upon it all round the village, and everybody came out of their houses to cheer him and give him presents.

But Jack never went up the beanstalk again, for it withered away, and what became of the giant's wife I cannot tell you, for I have never met anyone who knew.

Mrs. Oscar Wilde.



The Story of Aladdin.



ONCE upon a time, in a far city of the East, there lived a poor tailor, called Mustafa, who had only one child, who was named Aladdin, and an idle careless young fellow he was! He was a kind-hearted lad enough, but so thoughtless and indolent that his parents gave up in despair any idea of making him helpful to them, or to himself. And so it happened that when Mustafa fell ill and died, Aladdin and his mother were left alone in the world in great poverty and distress.

The poor woman sold all the stuffs, and managed to earn a very little money by spinning cotton, while Aladdin lounged about the streets with his comrades as usual, but feeling a little unhappy and ashamed. One day, as he was standing about, a tall, dark-faced stranger, with a long beard, passed by, and, catching sight of Aladdin, caught him by the arm, and drew him aside. He then asked him if he were not the son of Mustafa, the tailor, and, on hearing that he was, and that Mustafa was dead, seemed to burst into tears and weep bitterly.

"Alas, dear child," cried the stranger, who was no other than the African Magician, "alas, your father was my favourite brother. When Aladdin's mother saw the Magician and listened to his story, she was greatly surprised, for she had never heard her husband speak of this brother, and the African was very unlike him. But the stranger seemed so genuinely grieved at Mustafa's death, begging to be allowed to sit in his accustomed seat on the sofa, that her doubts vanished. But what most won her



heart was the affection he pretended to feel for Aladdin. Day after day he would come to the house, bringing presents for the boy, and promising that, as Aladdin did not seem to care about learning any trade, he himself would buy him a fine shop. One morning the Magician called for Aladdin in great haste, and told him to get ready as quickly as he could, for they were going for a long walk into the country. Aladdin accompanied his pretended uncle in high spirits, until they had reached the waste lands where the mountains begin. At last they came to a narrow valley between two high mountains, and there they sat down to rest. In a little while, however, the African told Aladdin to collect a quantity of dry sticks for a fire, for he was going to

show him something very wonderful.

Aladdin obeyed, and soon a bright blaze burned at their feet, from which a thick, strangely-perfumed smoke arose, and, when the Magician muttered some mysterious words, the fire and smoke vanished away, leaving a great, square stone with a brass ring in the centre. Then the Magician told him to lift the stone and go down into the cavern, holding his robe tightly round him, "for," he said, "if you touch the walls you will die instantly; go through the two long halls you will find, and at the end of the third, after you have passed through the gardens you will see a small lamp—take this, and put it in the bosom of your robe, and bring it to me."

So Aladdin lifted the stone, and did all as he was told; he found the lamp, and placing it in his bosom retraced his steps. As he returned he began to get over his fear, and he saw that the garden was full of the most wonderful trees, from which hung clusters of great variously-coloured fruits. And these were all precious stones! Rubies, topazes, amethysts, sapphires, emeralds, diamonds, and pearls. He plucked a great many and filled his pockets.

As he was climbing up the steps he saw his uncle standing at the entrance of the cavern, and cried out to him to give him his hand.



Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp.

"No, my dear child," he replied, "first give me the lamp, which must be in your way, and then I will help you out."

But this Aladdin refused to do, for the lamp was buried deep in his robe under the precious fruits of the garden, and he could not easily get at it. The Magician grew furious at this, and as Aladdin still said that he could not give the lamp up until he was out of the cave, he stamped upon the ground and threw some more perfume on the fire, and, as the stone rolled back into its place, hurried away in a passion.

Poor Aladdin, shut into the dark cavern, cried out in vain for help, and lifting up his hands in prayer, clasped them together so hard that he happened to rub a ring that the Magician had placed upon his finger before sending him into the cave. Instantly an immense Genie rose up before him, and bowing low, said, "What do you wish me to do; I am your slave as long as you wear that ring on your finger?" "Take me home," said Aladdin, quickly; and he had hardly spoken the words before he found himself at his own door. His mother was overjoyed to see him, and as there was no food in the house and no money, began looking about



for something she might sell. Aladdin then thought of selling the lamp which he still had with him, and as it was very dull and shabby-looking, Aladdin's mother tried to clean it. Scarcely, however, had she begun to rub it, when a Genie, even larger than the slave of the ring, appeared, and asked what she wanted. The poor woman was so frightened that she fainted; but Aladdin asked him to bring them something to eat, and in less time than it takes to tell it, the Genie returned, carrying a most magnificent feast of fruits and everything the heart could wish, piled in great golden and silver dishes.

And now all went well with Aladdin and his mother. The Slave of the Lamp brought them delicious food whenever they wished, and by selling the dishes to a goldsmith, they were able to live very comfortably. Aladdin had grown into a tall young man, when, one morning in the street, he chanced to see the Princess Badroulbador on her way to the bath. Now this Princess was one of the most lovely ladies in the world, and everyone

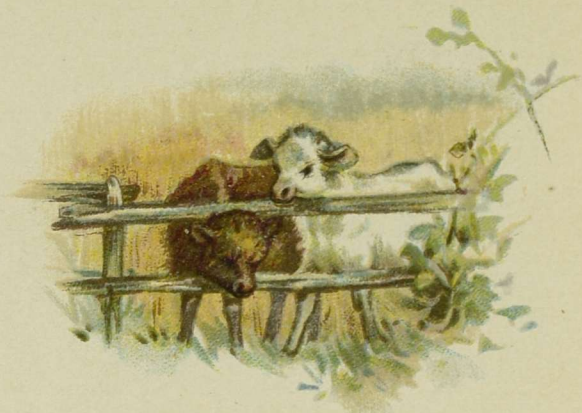


who saw her loved her directly. And thus it happened to Aladdin, who wished that she might be his wife. So it was arranged that Aladdin's mother should go and ask the Sultan, and she took with her, as a present, all the beautiful jewel-fruits that Aladdin had gathered in the enchanted gardens; and he was so filled with astonishment at the jewels, that he told her to tell her son that he would very likely give his consent at the end of three months. However, before the three months had passed, Aladdin found out that preparations were being made for the marriage of the Princess and the son of the Vizier. So he lost no time in calling up the Genie, whom he told to so frighten the Vizier's son that he would no longer wish to marry Badroulbador. This the Genie did by carrying him off every now and then, and imprisoning him in a dark place, until he begged to be set free from his betrothal. Then, by the aid of the Slave of the Lamp, who, in one single night, built him a splendid palace, Aladdin married the Princess and lived with her in great happiness. But this was not to last long, for the African Magician in a far country, looked in his magic glass to see what had become of Aladdin; and, instead (as he expected) of seeing him lying dead in the dark cavern, he saw him living in a palace and married to a lovely Princess.

Then his spite and fury knew no bounds, and buying a quantity of bright, new, copper lamps, he set off for the land where Aladdin lived, and went through the city, crying, "New lamps for old! New lamps for old!"



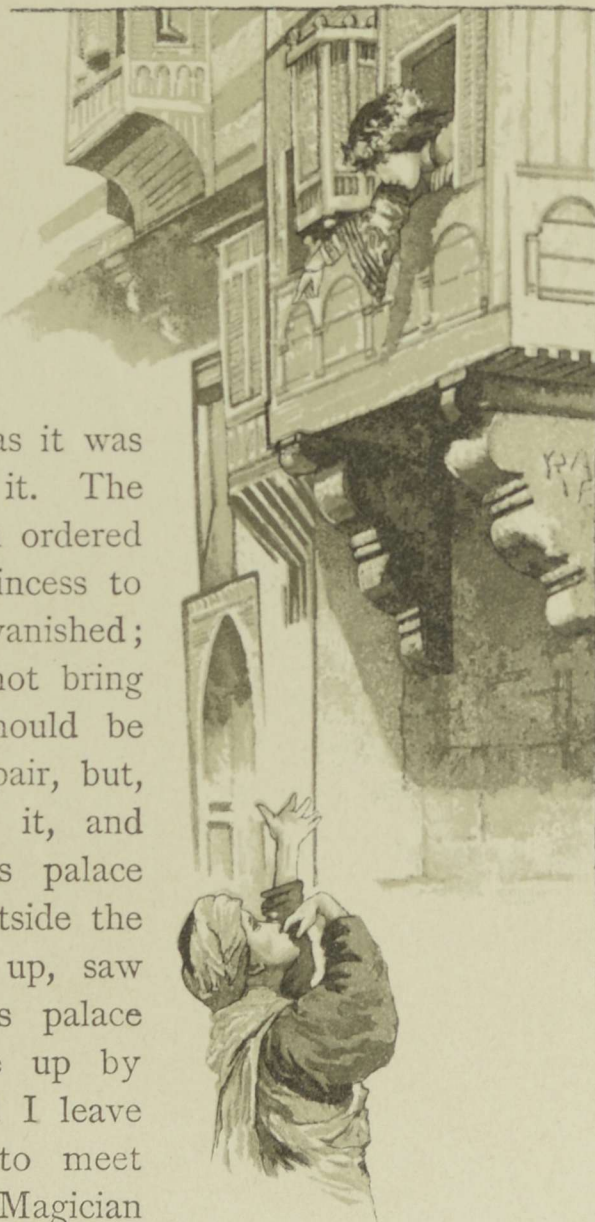
And while you are sleeping
and taking your ease,
A little brown mouse is stealing
your cheese.



So awaken and blow now,
my little Boy Blue;
Or kind Farmer Crops
will be angry with you.

Now Aladdin was away hunting, but the Princess and her maids saw the Magician, and were much amused at the silliness of a man who would exchange new lamps for old ones: and one girl took Aladdin's lamp from the corner where it was kept and gave it to the Magician in exchange for a new one. He then left the city, and as soon as it was dark he pulled out the lamp and rubbed it. The Genie appeared at once, and the Magician ordered him to transport the palace and the Princess to Africa. When Aladdin returned all had vanished; and the Sultan told him that if he did not bring back his daughter in three days he should be put to death. Aladdin went out in despair, but, suddenly remembering his ring, rubbed it, and asked the Genie to take him where his palace was. So he found himself transported outside the walls of a city in Africa, and, looking up, saw his dear wife leaning out of one of his palace windows. She whispered to him to come up by means of a secret door in the wall, and I leave you to imagine how glad they were to meet again. The Princess told him that the Magician was out, but would soon return, and that he threatened her that, if she would not consent to marry him, he would have her killed. Aladdin told her to ask the wicked Magician to sup with her that evening, and to put a powder (which he then gave her) into his wine.

The evening came, and they then sat down to the feast; and while the Magician was not looking, Badroulbador contrived to throw the powder into her cup of wine, and begging him to drink to her health, exchanged cups with him, first pretending to taste hers. The Magician drank the wine to the last drop and fell back dead in his chair. Then Badroulbador and her maids ran and let Aladdin in, and there was great rejoicing. Aladdin found the lamp, and rubbing it, commanded the Genie to take them, palace and all, back home again. This was done to the great joy of the Sultan and his people, and Aladdin and his wife lived happily ever after.





Little Boy Blue.

LITTLE Boy Blue, come blow me your horn,
The sheep's in the meadow,
the cow's in the corn.
A little bird whispered in Farmer Crops' ear,
And so he has heard all about it, I fear.

And while you are sleeping, and taking your ease,
A little brown mouse is stealing your cheese.
So awaken, and blow now, my little Boy Blue,
Or kind Farmer Crops will be angry with you!

The Old Woman who lived in a Shoe.

THERE was once an old woman, who lived in a shoe,
Who had so many children she didn't know what to do.
There was Marjorie, Dorothy, Kitty, and Poll,
And Nellie, and Mary, and Jenny, and Moll,
And Maudie, who squeaked out Ma-ma when you pressed her,
And Ethel, who looked so refined when you dressed her;
There was Jack, who could jump,
little folks to surprise,
And Dot, so accomplished
in closing her eyes.
And the poor old woman
grew tired, and hot,
And flurried, with washing
and dressing the lot.



Robinson
Crusoe.



YOUNG Crusoe was a naughty boy,
And good he wouldn't be ;
He wondered where his fortune was,
And so he went to sea.

The ship was wrecked, and he was thrown
Upon a barren strand ;
This never would have happened if
He'd only stopped on land.

Next day he saved, from off the wreck,
A good half-dozen axes ;
And built a house, where he was free
From rent, and rates, and taxes.

This island was so desolate,
It filled his soul with woe ;
There wasn't e'en a policeman there,
To ask which way to go.

Some bags of money, too, he saved ;
But in that barren land
He found no banks to put it in,
But only banks of sand.



He found some guns, and chests of clothes
Belonging to the sailors—
Such things are useful where there is
A scarcity of tailors.
So Crusoe thought in after years,
When he grew short of coats,
And had to make his clothing from
The cast-off skins of goats.

To see a naked footprint there,
Was startling on the whole ;
Because you know, for years and years,
He hadn't seen a soul.
But Robinson soon found what caused
This print of naked toes ;
Some blackeymoors had landed there,
To cook and eat their foes.

One poor doomed man took to his heels,
To try and save his head,
With three pursuers after him,
But Crusoe shot one dead.
The blackeys frightened at the bang,
Then jumped in their canoe ;
And when the gun had gone off once,
The blackeys went off too.

So on this island Crusoe stayed,
And, strange as it appears,
He never saw a stranger there
For over twenty years ;
Till one fine day, to his dismay,
While walking on the strand,
He happened to look down, and saw
A foot-print on the sand.



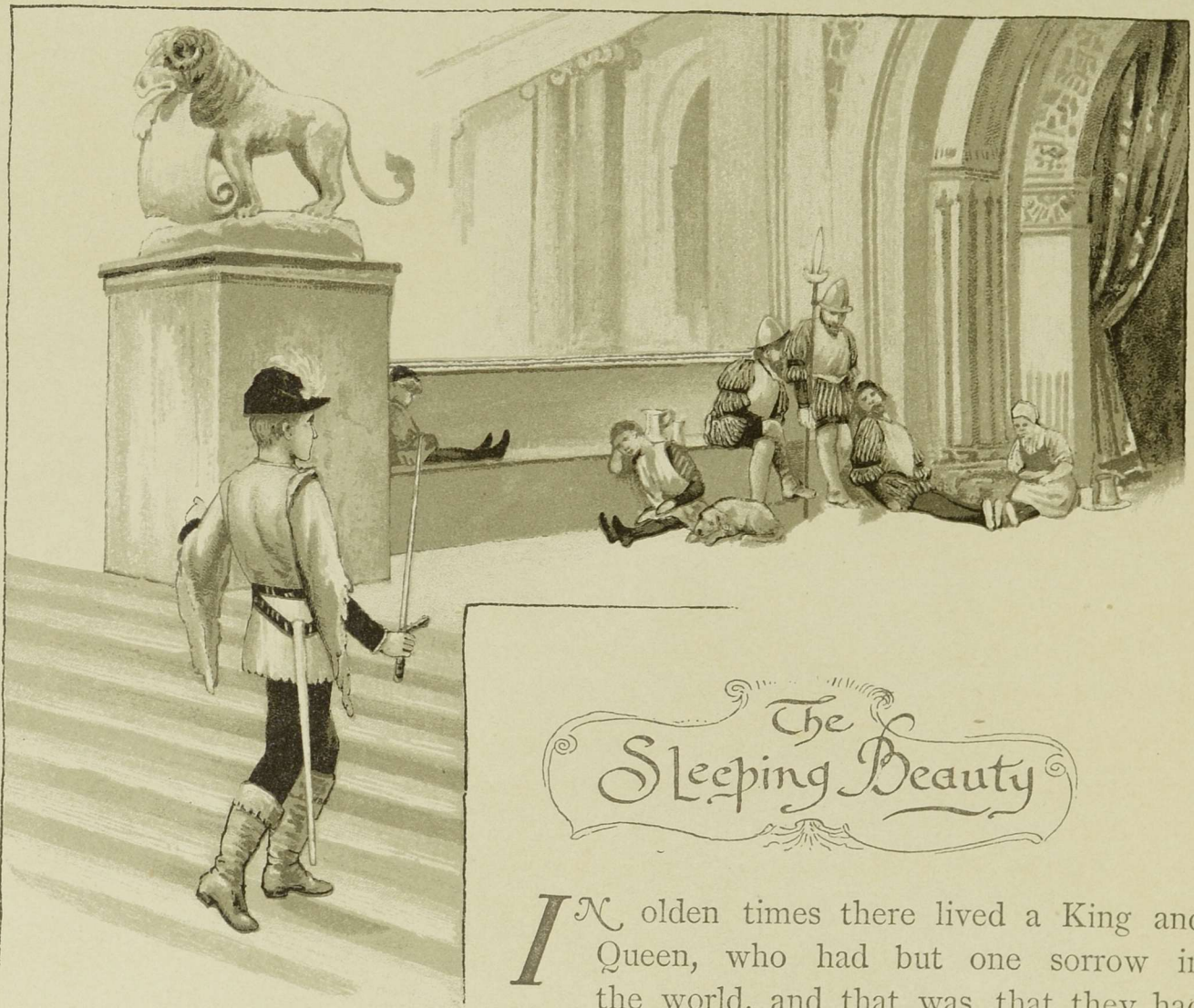
The man he saved was left behind,
And Crusoe called him Friday ;
And kept him as a servant there,
To keep his house all tidy.
And Robinson who found his own
Society a bore,
Was glad, and wished that Friday had
Been left behind before.

But perhaps you'd like to know what next
To these two men befel,
I'm very sorry, but I've not
The time or room to tell.
So if on knowing you are bent,
Then go with all good speed
Unto the nearest book-shop, then
Why—buy the book and read.

R. K. Mounsey.



A Footprint on the Sand.



The Sleeping Beauty

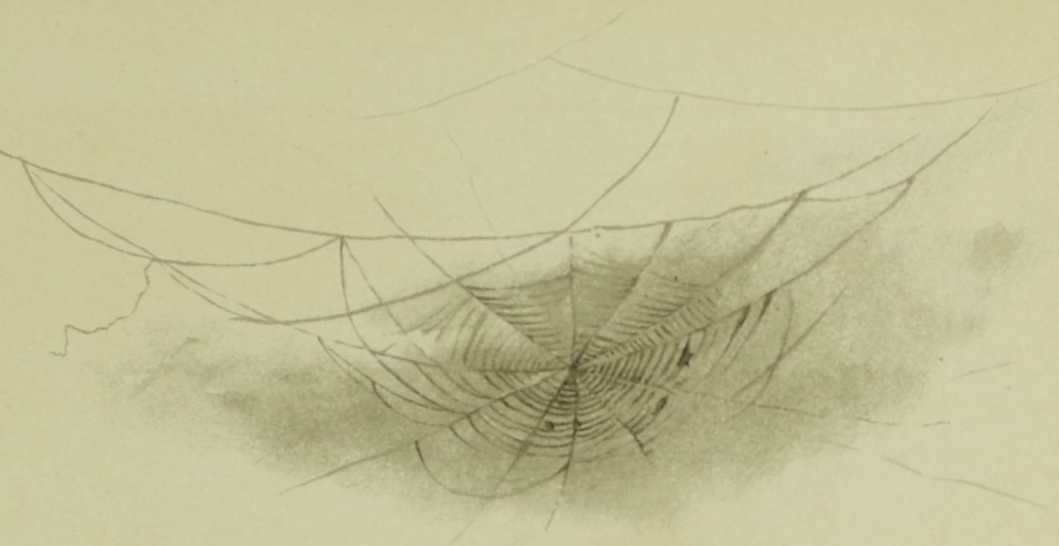
IN olden times there lived a King and Queen, who had but one sorrow in the world, and that was, that they had no children.

Imagine their delight, when one day a Fairy came to court and told them that a little daughter would be sent them!

There were great rejoicings when the baby came, and great preparations were made for the christening. All the Fairies in the neighbourhood were invited to act as godmothers. There happened to be thirteen in the King's dominions, but since he had only twelve golden plates out of which they could eat, the only thing to be done was to leave out the disagreeable one, in sending out the invitations.

But this was a great mistake, for the cross-tempered Fairy was of great power, and when she found out that she had not been invited, she was furious. Just as the splendid christening feast was over, and the Fairy-Godmothers were presenting the infant with their wonderful gifts: one with virtue, another with beauty, a third with wealth, and so on—the old Fairy came hobbling in, and stretching out her skinny hand, she exclaimed:

“My gift is, that on her fifteenth birthday she shall pierce her hand with a spindle and die of the wound! ha! ha! ha!” And with that spiteful laugh she vanished.



All present were terrified, the King and Queen were so much grieved that they wept bitterly. It was a sad scene.

Then it was that the twelfth Fairy, who had not yet given her wish, approached the Queen, and said, in a gentle voice:

“Fear not, friends! For although I cannot take away the evil wish yet I can soften it. She shall not die, but shall fall into a deep sleep for a hundred years. After which a handsome prince shall break the spell.” Thus spoke the good Fairy and vanished, and the christening party broke up in sadness.

Then the King had every spindle in his kingdom burnt, and forbade everyone, under penalty of death, to use one.

Meanwhile all the gifts of the Fairies were fulfilled, and the little Princess became beautiful, gentle, virtuous and clever.

It happened on the day when she was just fifteen years old that the King and Queen were out hunting, and so she was left alone in the castle. She thought it the most delightful birthday she had ever spent, as she was free to run hither and thither as she pleased, and able to explore rooms and chambers she had never seen before. At last she came to an old tower, and running lightly up the winding staircase, she arrived at a door. The door was shut, but in the lock she saw a rusty key. This she with great difficulty turned, the door flew open, and the strangest sight met her eyes. An old woman sat spinning





The
Sleeping Beauty

flax with a spindle. The Princess felt a little frightened. "What are you doing?" she asked.

"I am spinning," answered the old woman, nodding her head.

"What is that which twists round so fast?" enquired the Princess, taking the spindle in her hand. Scarcely had she done so, when she uttered a loud scream, and fell in a deep sleep.

In a few moments all the inhabitants of the castle were crowding up the narrow, winding, turret staircase. In the midst of all this confusion the King and Queen returned.

The King commanded that his daughter should be laid on a magnificent couch, in a sumptuous apartment, with armed guards stationed at her chamber door. Scarcely had this command been carried into execution, when a death-like silence came over everything, and the King and Queen became so drowsy that they fell asleep. This sleep extended over the whole palace: the horses in their stables, the dogs in their kennels, the birds in their cages, and even the flies upon the walls.

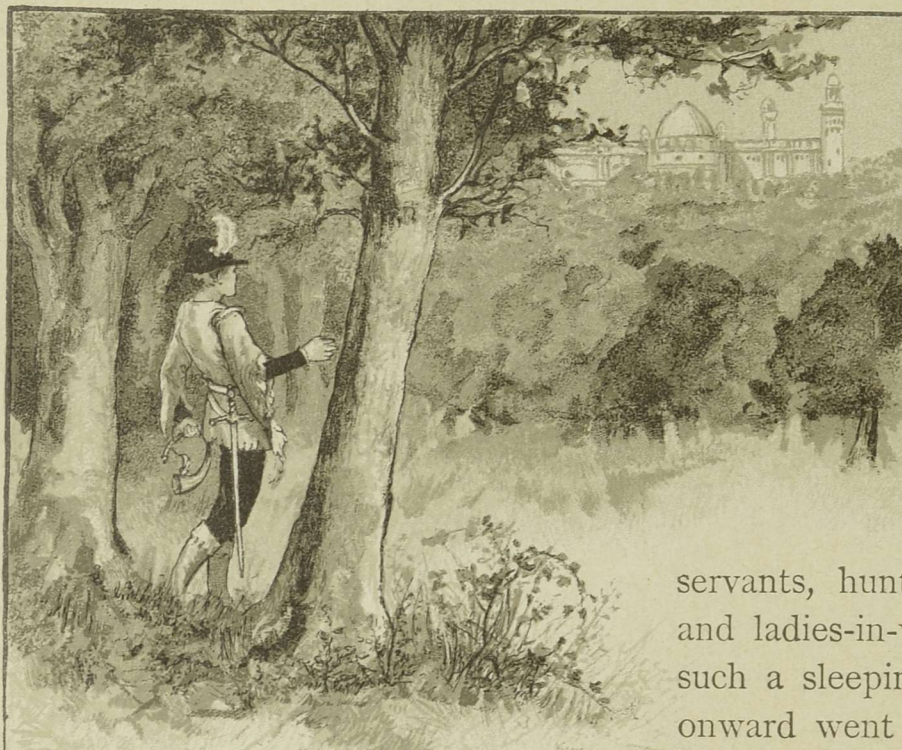
In a few days an impenetrable wood sprang up all round the moat, which grew so high year by year, so that one could not even see the flag upon the tower. In time the very existence of the castle was forgotten in the neighbouring villages, except that now and then one peasant would tell another of an Enchanted Palace, hidden in the forest.

At last the hundred years had passed away.

One Summer's day, while a king's son was hunting in the woods, he fancied he saw the turrets of a castle in the depths of the forest. His attendants thought it was imagination; but the Prince was so convinced about it, that at daybreak he set out with a stout heart to penetrate the mysterious wood.

As he approached the dense hedge of briars, the thorns turned to the sweetest flowers, and a passage seemed to open for him wherever he turned. Suddenly he emerged from the darkness of the forest, and there, not a hundred yards away in the brilliant sunlight, he saw a great white, glittering





castle! The Prince ran to the entrance with a beating heart. The King's fool stood there in a deep trance, surrounded by several courtiers, still laughing at his old joke of a hundred years ago! On and on he went, passing all the sleeping

servants, huntsmen, soldiers, courtiers, and ladies-in-waiting; never was there such a sleeping household seen! Still onward went the Prince, through endless corridors and spacious galleries,

until he came to some sleeping guards stationed before a tapestried entrance. Breathlessly he lifted the heavy curtains and looked in. Then the loveliest vision met his eyes! On a golden couch reclined the beautiful Princess—she was smiling sweetly—her rosy cheek pressed on her snowy arm, and her golden hair streaming all over the pink satin pillows. The Prince was so overcome with surprise and admiration, that he dropped on one knee, and kissed her lightly on the forehead. She opened her eyes, awoke, and looked at the handsome Prince in sweet perplexity.

A strange muffled sound was now heard throughout the Palace. The enchantment was broken, everything was moving and coming back to life! The King and Queen awakened, and finally all the ladies and gentlemen began to rub their eyes, and look about them. All stared at one another, and tried to remember the strange dreams they must have had.

Then the King and Queen recollected vaguely that their daughter was sleeping in the guarded apartment, and so hurried towards it, but they were met by the gallant Prince, who appeared leading the blushing Princess by the hand.

Great were the rejoicings throughout the land, when, on the following day, they were married in the greatest splendour.

The good Fairy came in her chariot drawn by winged dragons to bless them both, and the Prince and his bride lived happily together ever after.

